

TREE ADVISORY BOARD
VILLAGE OF COLD SPRING

MEMBERS: TONY BARDES; CHARLES DAY; KORY RIESTERER; GORDON ROBERTSON; JENNIFER ZWARICH

07/29/2015
MEETING MINUTES

8:00 Village Hall

Present: Tony Bardes, Charles Day, Kory Riesterer, Gordon Robertson, Jennifer Zwarich.

Summary:

Meeting opened at 8:04pm.

Motion made to approve 6/24 meeting minutes. Motion carried by vote of 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS

J. Zwarich made motion to strike item no. 5 from agenda (tree pit guard research report & discussion) in interest of saving time. Motion carried to move no. 5 to next month's agenda.

Brief update on TMP draft work, specifically **Tree Inventory Survey**. J. Zwarich reported on some of the issues TAB members were having completing the work such as the fact the original inventory was done by Cornell students and so reporting of tree species was at times inaccurate and location of trees not always easily verified, etc. TAB members reminded to please use GPS coordinates to plot updated tree info and to try to have work complete by end of August. It was advised to also attach photos of trees when possible. Since last meeting some updates to inventory categories were also made and would be shared with members. T. Bardes & G. Robertson both raised issues of village liability in terms of having hazards listed in inventory (and therefore a known 'record') and J. Zwarich said she would consult with village attorney. TAB agreed that it was important to always 'protect the village'.

An update on **Main St. tree holiday light removal** was shared by J. Zwarich, who reported the Mayor had sent a letter to the Chamber requesting removal of the lights. All appears to be proceeding smoothly.

J. Zwarich also passed out a **draft list of local arborists and tree service companies** for discussion. TAB members will add to the list before it is made final for residents and businesses to choose from. G. Robertson mentioned TAB should add a disclaimer to the list before making it public, wording such as "this is not an endorsement but simply a list to reference". TAB will internally create their own list of preferred vendors. The list will include ISA certification and T. Bardes recommended it be publicized in the papers, posted on fb and village website etc.

NEW BUSINESS

Floor was made open to village resident **John Lane of 5 Mountain Ave.** who described his request for permission to remove, at his own expense, two Norway Maples on publicly owned village property adjoining

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his residence for the purposes of installing solar panels on his roof. Mr. Lane described the requirements for solar panels to be 80% free from shading in order to qualify for NYSEDA rebate and be cost and energy efficient. The solar analysis done recommended that he remove a Norway Maple on his own property in the backyard as well as removing the two Norway Maples on village property in order to achieve the 80% criteria. He has yet to consult with an arborist to determine if removal or topping would be best, but argued that by removing the two invasive Maples he would be improving the health of a mature Norway Spruce on the village property. His adjoining neighbor, Donald McDonald, reportedly approves of the plan. TAB members each weighed in with their thoughts as to how this particular request had the potential to set precedent in the village with residents in future requesting public tree removal or pruning in the name of solar panel installation. TAB agreed that any recommendations made would need to be done in a case by case manner and that it was in the interests of everyone for TAB to establish a set of criteria by which to make such recommendations moving forward. Mr. Lane's request appears to be the 'guinea-pig' for this process and it was determined that over the next month individual TAB members would e-mail J. Zwarich ideas for said criteria which she would compile for discussion at the next meeting. As public trees are village property and therefore village assets it was determined that the idea of "village loss vs. village gain" would guide TAB in the creation of criteria. J. Zwarich will also research models of similar sets of criteria already in existence at other Tree Advisory Boards in the area. G. Robertson requested TAB receive a copy of the village's own survey of the public parcel next to John Lane's home. Mr. Lane had provided his own survey of the parcel. Mr. Lane also mentioned that he would be happy to replace any public trees approved for removal with an in kind donation of trees of comparable value for planting either on the parcel in question or elsewhere in the village. TAB briefly discussed how this set of criteria in some ways mirrors criteria used by other village boards in making determinations (such as ZBA and HDRB etc.).

J. Zwarich then reported on a recent **violation of Village Code** re: existing tree law on Furnace Street. Discussion ensued as to what TAB's response/role in such matters should be. What is the process for when someone cuts a public tree without receiving approval? Village law is the same as it has always been in these matters, so where does the newly formed Tree Advisory Board fit in? TAB members brought up various thoughts, including how to expedite the process for requesting permission to cut a public tree and who is ultimately responsible when cutting is done without permission (homeowner? contractor?). TAB concluded that it would be best to create a 'flowchart' of sorts in order to make the process clear to the village and public, especially since the public appears to be paying greater attention now to public trees. TAB determined its ultimate role was to follow the letter of the existing law, which passes such matters first to the village code enforcement officer. If the village seeks further input and/or clarification from TAB as to a specific violation, TAB will then advise. J. Zwarich agreed to draw up a flowchart outlining the chain of command process to share with TAB members at the next meeting for further discussion and approval.

Brief discussion ensued regarding TAB's role in **educating the public** as to such matters and it was agreed that a "PR Campaign" of sorts should be launched so the public better understands the role TAB plays in the village and why it is doing the work it does (i.e. tree inventory): to protect a public resource – trees.

Comments were received from the public. **Airinhos Serradas** spoke in support of TAB's work and said he 'likes what he sees'. As a homeowner previously concerned with TAB's reach encroaching on private property, he now sees that TAB's work really is only concerned with public trees. Serradas asked TAB about how it would document changes to village owned trees over the years and J. Zwarich answered this is exactly what the tree

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inventory will address. It will be updated every 5 years with photos of trees attached in order for TAB to be able to monitor tree health and prioritize its work.

Motion to adjourn meeting passed at 9:40 pm.